



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON VOLUNTEERISM RECEIVES \$2.5 MILLION TO EXPAND AMERICORPS

RALEIGH - The North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service announced that it has received more than \$2.5 million to fund 221 AmeriCorps slots during the 2004-05 program year, a \$1 million increase from the current cycle.

"This increased funding will allow us to expand our AmeriCorps programs in North Carolina," said Gov. Easley. "We look forward to the year ahead knowing that AmeriCorps members will be serving more children and addressing additional unmet needs in our communities."

The N.C. Commission has been holding technical assistance workshops across the state to inform people of the available AmeriCorps grants. Grant applications are due to the N.C. Commission by March 23 and program determinations will be made in early fall.

Earlier this year, Congress passed the Omnibus Appropriations Bill, which gave the National Corporation for Community Service almost a 20 percent increase in AmeriCorps funding. With the additional funds, the N.C. Commission will be able to add new AmeriCorps programs and returning programs will be able to expand their services to meet the increasing demands of their clients and communities.

The N.C. Commission is a federally funded agency housed in the governor's office. Currently, the N.C. Commission administers 15 AmeriCorps programs in 52 counties across the state. AmeriCorps members tutor and mentor school-aged youth, improve the quality of childcare for preschool children, address the need for affordable housing by building houses for low-income families and assist individuals with disabilities in gaining employment.

In Beaufort County, the AmeriCorps members with Project HEART tutor and mentor at-risk students. At Chocowinity Middle School in Beaufort County, students who were served by AmeriCorps members showed an average 18-point gain on reading scores from fourth to fifth grade. Expected gain for this population is 4.6 points.

"Without the AmeriCorps funding, we would not be able to serve many of our at-risk students," said Patricia Calfee, curriculum specialist and staff development coordinator at Beaufort County Schools. "AmeriCorps members not only help at-risk students with reading, they help students find new confidence in themselves so they ultimately stay in school. Members are making changes that will last for generations to come."